(d) if so, the extent to which the setting up of Employment Commission is going to solve unemployment problem in the country?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SEKHAR RAO): (a) At present, there is no proposal under consideration in the Ministry of Labour & Employment to set up an Employment Commission in the country.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Downsizing of work force

2587. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that almost all the major trade unions and federations have demanded stoppage of downsizing of work force and lifting of ban on recruitment; and

(b) if so, Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SEKHAR RAO): (a) and (b) The Government has received a representation from the All India State Government Employees Federation demanding, *inter-alia*, stopping of downsizing, closure, privatization and corporatization of Government departments and Public Sector.

According to information received from the Ministry of Finance, keeping in view the adequacy of staffing, the need to foster convergence and avoid overlap in functions, the Expenditure Reforms Commission (ERC) had identified around 42,000 posts for abolition. Against this, concerned Ministries/Departments have identified around 24,000 posts for abolition of which, 18682 posts have already been abolished. The ERC had also advised that Annual Direct Recruitment Plans be prepared for each Ministry/ Department. The Department of Personnel & Training have issued instructions in May 2001, that Direct Recruitment should be limited to 1/3rd of the Direct Recruitment vacancies subject to ceiling that this does not exceed 1% of the total sanctioned strength of the Department. Around

105226 posts have been identified for abolition and around 42723 posts have been identified to be filled up, as a result of these instructions.

Curtailing of interest rates on EPF

†2588. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have declared 9.5 per cent interest on EPF for the financial years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for curtailing the interest rate for the financial year 2004-05, inspite of giving approval of 9.5 per cent interest?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SEKHAR RAO): (a) and (b) Under Para 60(1) of the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, 1952, the Central Government has approved the crediting of interest to the member's account for the years as detailed below:

Year	Rate of Interest
2002-03	9.5%
2003-04	9.0% + 0.5% bonus interest
2004-05	9.5%

(c) Does not arise, in view of (a) and (b) above.

Unclaimed deposits with Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)

2589. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the total amount lying unclaimed with the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) classified as Unclaimed Deposits (UCDs);

(b) the reasons for this unclaimed deposits; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to find out the members whose fund has been lying unclaimed?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.